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ABSTRACT

Intended for parents, the booklet provides information on taking care of infants with special problems at birth. Three chapters cover the following age levels: 1 to 4 months, 5 to 8 months, and 7 to 10 months. Among topics considered are feeding, safety, and discipline. Toys are suggested for infants up to 12 months old. (SBH)

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Get Up and Grow

A handbook for parents of babies with special problems at birth

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Table of Contents

5 **Dear Parents**

Chapter 1
Baby is 1 to 4 months old

7 Some Perfectly Normal Feelings
9 Home at Last
12 Feeding Time
14 Babies Love to Learn
18 Keeping a Wiggly Baby Safe

Chapter 2
Baby is 5 to 8 months old

20 Baby's World Gets Bigger
21 Naps and Bedtime
22 Food for Good Health
24 Helping Little Muscles Grow and Learn
28 Baby Talk and Learning Words
29 Safety for Reachers and Grabbers

Chapter 3
Baby is 9 to 12 months old

32 A Little Bit of Yes and No
37 Feeding Time Gets Messy, But Fun
39 Baby Really Starts Moving
40 Listening to Grownups Is the Greatest
42 Helping Baby Explore Safely

45 **You've Come a Long Way, Baby**

Dear Parent

This booklet will give you some common sense help in taking care of a baby with special problems at birth. Please read it as carefully as you can. Then ask questions about anything you don't understand or would like to know more about.

There are many different kinds of problems that can affect the newborn. A few newborn babies have difficulty breathing, some have heart problems and others may look physically different in some ways. The most common special problem is the baby that comes early—a *premature* baby. He may not be ready to do all the things that he could do if he came at the regular time. He may need special help for breathing and feeding, and to protect it from sickness, and so it probably will have to stay in the hospital longer than the usual time. The special care unit in the

hospital has doctors, nurses and equipment for just this kind of problem, and babies as small as under two pounds have been helped to grow up normally.

This booklet is in three chapters, for babies of different ages up to about one year. When you read it, *remember to allow for the amount of time your baby came early.* If your baby was two months early, he may be two months behind schedule. So Chapter 2, for example, for babies 5 to 8 months old, won't be about your baby until he's 7 to 10 months old. You may have to add even more if your baby was very sick at birth. It's hard not to compare your baby with others, but remember that he will grow and develop at his own rate and with his own special personality.

Chapter 1
Baby is 1 to 4 months old

Some perfectly normal feelings

Any problem with a new baby must seem like a *big* problem, probably the biggest you've ever had. You may feel helpless or a little afraid because there's so much you don't understand. Maybe you blame yourself, or you're worried that you don't care enough about your baby. Or maybe you're mad about the whole thing—mad at the hospital, your doctor or the baby. Worst of all, it feels so strange to have to go home and leave your baby in the hospital.

Hang in there. Your feelings are perfectly normal. If you want to make things easier for yourself you'll talk about them. There are people on the hospital staff who want to listen and help you.

In spite of what most people think, love isn't always automatic—it doesn't just come with the baby. You may have to work at it a little, and it takes time. That's part of the reason your feelings are so mixed up at first.

When you visit your baby in the hospital, don't expect him to make a fuss over you, because he doesn't know or care about *anyone* yet. Probably he'll just sleep a lot. But this is a good time to start building a feeling of closeness by holding and cuddling him and talking softly. Don't be afraid to handle him just because he's small. He won't break. Do this every time you visit and as often as possible when you take him home. Little by little your baby will get to know you, and soon you will be the most important person in his life. This special feeling between you is the first step in helping him get up and grow.

Home at Last

It takes many weeks for parents and a new baby to learn to live with each other, so don't worry if your house seems upset at first. Your days will be filled with diapers and bottles and other baby things. And at night you'll be treated to a new kind of "late show" when your baby gets hungry, a show you can't just turn off like the TV!

If you suddenly feel all alone, try to remember that your baby will give you more and more company as he grows older.

The main thing to do now is learn how to *take good care of your baby and still be good to yourself.* For the baby, start building a routine for him to settle into, which simply means doing things like feeding and bathing at about the same time every day. At first you and the baby will have

different ideas about what the best time is for feeding—he'll be hungry when you're not ready, or you'll be all set to feed him and he won't be hungry. But soon you'll get together and the first step in building a routine will be done. This is very important for your baby because it makes him feel the world is a safe place, and he'll want to learn more about it.

Taking care of yourself is also very important, because if you're always tired or upset you won't be much good to anyone, least of all your baby—who will soon be very smart at figuring out how you're feeling. Most of all, be sure to get enough rest. Take a nap in the middle of the day, so you won't be too worn out from those night feedings. When baby is napping, pamper yourself a little with a relaxing bath. Get someone to watch the baby while you get out of the house for a change of scene.

Babies and crying just naturally go together, and soon you'll be an expert on the subject. Remember that crying is the only way your baby can tell you he's hungry or his diaper needs changing or something else is bothering him. Crying is mostly not for something serious. Check and see if he is too warm or too cool, or maybe wants to be moved just a little or needs a little help to burp up an air bubble. Some babies cry for a short while before falling asleep—it's just their way of settling down. If your baby is a non-stop crier you'll want to talk to your doctor.

Some babies cry a lot and are very active and don't seem to get enough sleep, while others may be too quiet and seem to sleep too much. If your baby is the active type, try giving him the quiet treatment—no loud noises, no sudden surprises, everything slow and easy. If he's the quiet type, try perking him up with lots of activity, bright colors, new sounds, tickling, and so on.

The main thing with all babies is to give lots of cuddling and touching. Talk or sing to your baby, carry or rock him, and *always* try to show that you're happy or excited when your baby does any little thing that's new.

Feeding Time

If you can relax and enjoy feeding your baby, then sooner or later your baby will relax and enjoy it too. That's the most important thing to remember at feeding time.

Many babies with special problems at birth will take longer to feed. Some may take longer than others to learn how to suck properly, because their tongue and lip muscles aren't quite ready to do the job. If your baby needs help, try putting a little soft baby food or thick formula (runny liquids won't work) on his lips, to give those muscles some exercise. Or you can put some on his pacifier and give it to him. There are special

pacifiers that are good for this problem. One kind that works well is called the "Nuk" and can be bought at most drugstores. Although you may have considered breast feeding, this can be more difficult with the premature infant or the infant with special needs at birth. You will want additional guidance from your doctor.

A newborn baby can't digest whole milk. That's why a formula is used, usually with extra vitamins and iron. Your doctor will tell you which formula is best for your baby and how much to give him.

Do a good job of washing your baby's bottles and nipples to get rid of germs. Use hot, sudsy water and a brush to get inside the bottles, then rinse extra well. A dishwasher works great, if you have one, but don't mix baby things with the family dishes. Baby bottles will wash cleaner if you remember to rinse them right after feeding time.

If you mix your own formula, always keep it in the refrigerator until you're

ready to warm it up for feeding. Never give your baby any formula that smells sour or has been standing around outside the refrigerator, because it may contain germs.

All babies swallow air with their formula. Help your baby burp up the air bubble two or three times during a feeding by *gently* patting his back, either sitting up or lying on his tummy on your lap. Most babies will also spit up small amounts of formula. If your baby vomits up large amounts of formula—most of what you give him—for many feedings in a row, check with your doctor.

Don't forget that feeding is a perfect time to love, cuddle and feel close to your baby.

Babies Love to Learn

Your baby starts learning the very minute he's born. Everything he sees, hears, smells, tastes, or touches is part of what he learns. But nature has fixed it so that he learns more from people than from things, and the people he learns most from are *you*, his parents. Like it or not, you're the world's best teachers for this particular baby.

You don't need any diplomas or college degrees. You don't even have to *try* to teach. Your baby is such a great learner that, once there is a feeling of closeness between you, *everything you do with your baby is teaching!*

One of the main ways babies learn is by copying what their parents do. Try holding your baby facing you in your lap, then pucker your lips and make a kissing or sucking sound. Keep this up for two or three whole minutes, to be sure your baby gets the message. When your baby "answers" you by doing a little thing—he might only wave an arm or move his eyes or lips a little—show him how happy it makes you by giving a big smile and saying things like "yes" or "good baby." Try doing other things, like making clucking sounds, or sticking out your tongue,

or just smiling, or saying baby words such as "ga" or "mama." When your baby starts doing some of these things, make up others for him to copy. Be sure to copy what *he* does too! Finish your little game with some hugging and cooing, and your baby will be in heaven.

A good lesson to help muscles grow strong is the simple sit-up. Start with your baby on his back and just pull both his hands gently and slowly until he's sitting up. If his head hangs back, help it up with your hand. Don't worry if his head flops forward. This is very tiring for a small baby, so do it only once or twice a day at first.

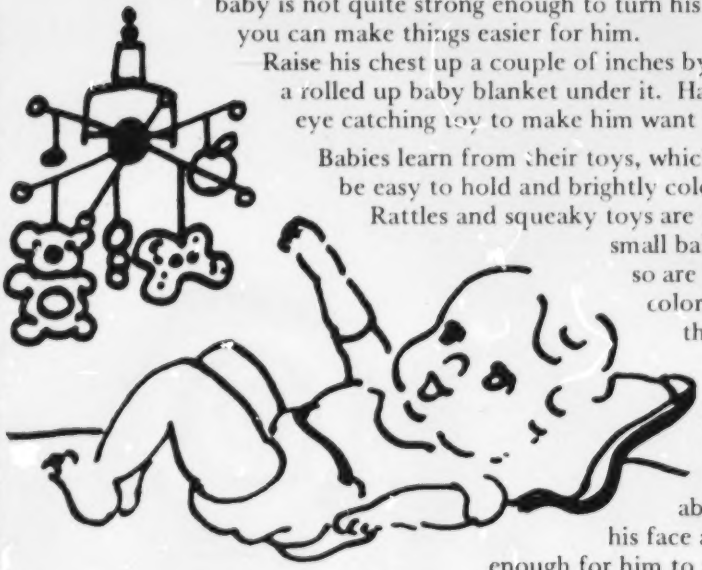
When babies lie on their stomachs, they like to raise their heads and turn them from side to side,

just for the fun of doing it or to look around. If your baby is not quite strong enough to turn his head, you can make things easier for him.

Raise his chest up a couple of inches by putting a rolled up baby blanket under it. Have an eye catching toy to make him want to look around.

Babies learn from their toys, which should be easy to hold and brightly colored.

Rattles and squeaky toys are fun for a small baby, and so are brightly colored things that hang above his crib and move around with the wind. Hang them about 8" from his face and low enough for him to swipe at it



when he's ready. If you attach bells, your baby will soon learn that when he swipes he makes the bells ring. *Babies learn best when they can make things happen themselves.*

For your baby, the biggest show in town is *you* doing things around the house! So be sure to get a good baby seat for him to sit in, safe and comfortable, to watch the action.

Keeping a Wiggly Baby Safe

Did you know that more babies die from accidents around the house than from sickness or any other reason? That's a terrible shame, because almost all accidents could have been stopped just by using a little common sense. The main thing is that *someone has to be with the baby all the time when he's not safe in his crib or playpen.*

A small baby can squirm or wiggle right off a dressing table in nothing flat. Or slip down into the bath water, even if you thought he could sit up. So don't turn your back on him, even for a minute.

If the phone rings, don't leave your baby alone in the bath or on a dressing table—either let it ring or take him along when you go to answer it. And never leave him alone in the car.

Check the crib extra carefully, because your baby will be spending a lot of time in it. Make sure the matress fits snug all around, so he can't stick an arm or leg down. And don't ever put your baby in a crib that has slats so far apart that he can stick his head through, not even if there's a bumber pad all around— they don't always work.

Finally, don't put a string or chain around your baby's neck for any reason, not even a pacifier.

Chapter 2
Baby is 5 to 8 months old

Baby's World Gets Bigger

Congratulations!
The first three months are over, and they're usually the hardest. There were times when you probably wished you could trade your baby in. But there were good times, too, when your baby did things for the first time, and happy quiet times when you felt very close to each other. The next few months should be more restful and more fun.

Now your baby's world is getting bigger as he notices more things going on around him. You can help by giving lots of attention—don't be afraid of spoiling him. It will help him feel safe and confident in his growing world, and will actually help him be happy when alone.

Your baby is also noticing other people more and more. Most babies go through a "shy period" when they're around 7 or 8 months old, and your help and understanding will be needed then. It's a natural thing, and it actually shows that the baby is getting smarter, that he's noticing differences between people

Naps and Bedtime

Somewhere around 6 to 8 months your baby will settle for two naps a day. Even if he's not the sleepy kind, it's a good idea to put him in his crib for a rest. If he wants to play or gurgle instead of sleep, that's okay. Some babies just don't need as much sleep as others.

At bedtime some babies will want to stay awake and play or will cry to keep you from leaving them alone. Do your very best to

make bedtime a happy time, and give your baby some special quiet time to settle down before being put to bed. But once your baby is in his crib and has had a good-night kiss, you shouldn't have to go back in the room. If you run to the crib for every little cry, you're only teaching your baby how to boss you around.

Many babies have special little habits for when they're tired—sucking their thumb, rubbing a favorite blanket or stuffed toy, tickling their nose with the corner of a blanket. These are nothing to worry about. If your baby does these things when he's *not* tired, then he may be trying to tell you that he's bored, or upset, or feeling sick, or just needs some attention from you.

Food for Good Health

This is the time when you can start making some changes in feeding. You'll be slowly increasing the amount of formula you give your baby to about 6 to 8 ounces

at 8 months, and the number of feedings will come down to about 3 or 4 per day. By 5 months your doctor will probably have you start your baby on fruit juice to give him some vitamin C.

This is also the time to start feeding strained baby foods, but be sure to start one new food at a time, and not more often than every three to four days. That way if a new food makes your baby sick, you'll know which one it is and can stop giving it.

After about 6 months your baby may be ready to start taking sips from a cup (make sure it's unbreakable). Start with very small amounts in the cup and with you holding it. After a while your baby will want to hold it himself, with both hands, and you should praise him a lot when he does it. There will be many spills, of course, but there's no need to scold your baby because it's all part of learning, and you want learning to be a happy thing.

You can also give your baby some chewy things to help exercise his jaw muscles and massage his gums. Small chunks of banana, toast, baby biscuit, or plain bread are good for starters. If you put a few pieces in front of him, his arm muscles will get good practice in moving things to his mouth.

Don't give your baby things he can choke on, like peanuts, popcorn, or hard candy. Sweets of any kind are not good for a baby, and don't put sugar or chocolate in his milk or baby food, or he might get so "hooked" on them that he won't eat anything without them.

Helping Little Muscles Grow and Learn

Your baby is getting more active and full of surprises every day. Little tricks like rolling over just when you're ready to change a diaper help keep parents on their toes. Your baby's muscles are growing stronger, and there's a lot you can do to help.

When your baby is sitting, you should give him only as much help as he needs, so that his own muscles will get the most possible exercise. If he's wobbly, hold him higher up around his chest. If he's steady, hold him lower down around his hips.
When you can do that, he's ready for a walker or jumper, which will let him push and bounce with his legs. If his legs don't reach the floor, put something like a pillow or cushion under them. You can also help his leg muscles get some exercise by just holding him in a standing position over your lap and letting him push and bounce with his legs.

A playpen is very handy for a special play area where you know your baby will be safe, giving you a chance to do a few things around the house or just take a break. Don't use a crib for a playpen or your baby won't know when he should

sleep and when he should play. Be sure to put the playpen where your baby can see you or other people in the family. The main thing you have to watch out for with a playpen is that you don't leave your baby in it too much. Give him about as much time out of the playpen as in it, so he can explore the rest of the house.

Baby games like pattycake and peek-a-boo are not

only fun but great for teaching him new things. The trick is to show him how, but slow and easy. Smile a lot and make it a happy scene, and do it [illegible] many times until he catches on.

There are many things around the house that make good toys for a baby at this age—pots and pans, lids, spoons, plastic dishes, measuring cups, clothespins (the kind that are one solid piece, without the spring), and so on. Make sure whatever you give your baby is clean, unbreakable, and has no sharp edges.

Good store-bought toys for this age are simple things like blocks, rattles, stuffed animals, dolls, squeaky rubber toys, firm

teething rings and so on. "Busy Boxes" have a variety of fun things for baby to do and can be attached to the crib or playpen. Your baby will love to have *any* new thing to explore and learn from, and he might have just as much fun with the box the toy comes in as the toy itself.

Baby Talk and Learning Words

Even though your baby can't say anything but gurgly baby talk at this age he's about ready to understand some simple words, like *up, eat, bottle, bye-bye,* and so on. When he learns a word, he won't be able to tell you that he's done it, of course. You have to be able to tell by little things he does, such as wiggling around or raising his arms, that the word is making him excited.

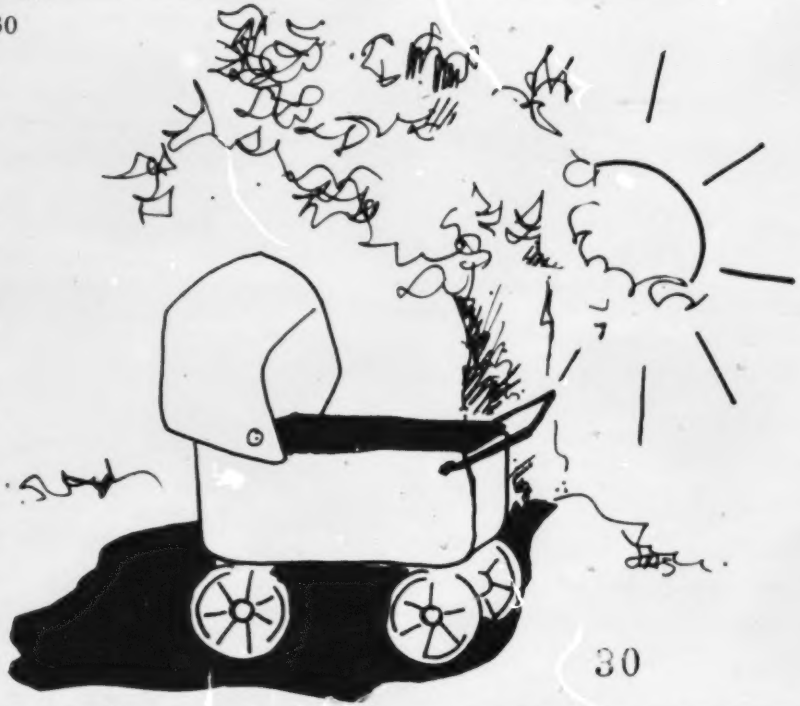
You can help him learn by saying the word with the action, such as "up" when you pick him up and "down" when you put him down. Do this as often as you can.

Don't forget that talking with your baby can be fun for both of you. If you repeat the sounds your baby makes, you'll you'll make him happy and excited and you'll be getting him ready to repeat the sounds *you* make later on when you want to teach him real words.

Safety for Reachers and Grabbers

Babies love to explore at this age, and they'll grab your hot cup of coffee in a split second if you make the mistake of leaving it near them. They also explore with their mouths, to find out how things taste, so keep small toys, buttons, and pins out of reach. They're much too easy to swallow or choke on.

Paint with lead in it is poisonous and against the law now, but toys and cribs from a few years ago are still around.



Don't take chances with old painted things that could make your baby sick if he chewed on them. And always make sure that your baby's toys and stuffed animals don't have any sharp edges or loose parts.

Never let your baby have *any* kind of plastic bag. If he puts it on his head it can cut off the air he breathes.

Be especially careful that your baby doesn't get more than ten minutes of direct sun at a time. It's healthy, but it can cause sunburn, dry him out, or just make him too hot.

Chapter 3
Baby is 9 to 12 months old

A Little Bit of Yes and No

Some big changes will be happening in your baby around this age. It's easy to keep an eye on him when he's too small to move from where you put him. But when he learns to crawl around and get into everything, suddenly he's as much to handle as *two* babies.

This is a very important time for both baby and parents. You have to child-proof your house by getting almost everything dangerous or breakable up out of reach or stored away. And you have to teach your baby to stay away from those dangerous or breakable things you can't put away. This is when you start saying no.

It's the easiest thing in the world to teach your baby
that "no" means he should stop or you'll get mad.
The hard part is teaching your baby that a
"no" is for his own good, for his
protection. That means you have to be very careful
how you use a "no."
If he finds out that it is a danger signal when you warn him
not to touch a hot stove or radiator, or not
to pull something off a table down on his head,
then he's going to listen to you.
But if you use a "no" to keep him from touching
some pretty thing that you really should have put out
of his sight, then your baby is just going to think
that you're a bossy person who won't let
him have any fun, and he won't pay attention
to the word "no" or to you either.
Don't worry about having to say "no" a lot when
you take your baby to the store or to visit a friend—
he'll soon learn that some things are different when you
leave your own house, and he won't hold it
against you.

One of the secrets in keeping from saying "no" too much is to find a way to change a "no" to a "yes." For example, if your baby is driving you crazy by dropping things on the floor from his high-chair, you could make a game of it by putting a cardboard box or laundry basket on the floor for him to drop them in.

Spanking doesn't do a thing for a baby under one year old except teach him that parents aren't always friendly. If you feel like spanking your baby too often, it's probably a sign that you, not the baby, should do something else—time to get a baby sitter and get out of the house for a while.

The main thing is to try extra hard to always treat your baby the same way. Don't say "no" about something one day and then let him do it the next. The idea is to teach him that the world and the people in it stay pretty much the same, and he's going to grow up and be able to handle himself in it. If you change your rules all the time, he's going to think the world is a strange place and that he's never going to be smart enough to figure it all out.

Feeding Time Gets Messy, But Fun

You won't believe the mess one little baby can make the first few times he tries to feed himself. He'll get more applesauce in his hair and his lap than in his mouth—and he'll love every minute of it.

You should, too, because it's a big step for a baby. Just put some newspaper on the floor and a big bib or towel on the baby—or maybe even take his clothes off—and let him have his fun. In time his aim will get better and the mess will be less.

Try to keep feeding time a happy and relaxed time for everybody. Your baby will probably like to have things warmed up a little. If he won't eat certain foods, wait a few days and try again. Or you can give things he likes and doesn't like together, taking turns, one spoon at a time. If he just won't eat some things, that's okay—you don't like everything either.

Never overfeed your baby. If he closes his mouth, turns his head, or spits the food out, it probably means he's had enough.

By now he's probably eating 7 to 10 tablespoons of solid foods at each feeding. You can give your baby many of the

same foods your family eats—just chop them up very fine with a knife. The food you make at home is tastier, fresher and probably more healthy than the baby foods that come in a jar.

Baby Really Starts Moving

What a surprise! One morning you go to your baby's crib and find him sitting up! He's even getting so he can pull himself up to a standing position in his crib or playpen.

Getting up on hands and knees is pretty wobbly at first, and he might rock for a long time, and then go backwards before he goes frontwards. But pretty soon your baby is going to be crawling and getting into absolutely everything.

One of the favorite places for babies to head is the kitchen cabinets, to take out all the pots and pans. A few lucky parents figure out how to teach their baby to put them back in. But if you don't, remember that your baby just wants to act like you. That's why babies at this age love toys that are like things that grownups use, such as hairbrushes, combs and play telephones.

Other good household toys for this age are spoons, spools, clothespins, blocks and containers to put all these in, such as a shoebox or a coffee can (no sharp edges, please). For a toy that gives a lot of fun, it's hard to beat a ball. You should be able to make up many different games that you and your baby can play together with a ball, starting with rolling it back and forth, or just throwing it a little way for your baby to chase and bring back.

When your baby is around one year old, you'll be wondering when he'll take his first step. All babies are different on this—some do it early, some later. It doesn't really matter when, and it's nothing to worry about if it's later. He'll do it when he's good and ready.

Listening to Grownups is the Greatest

The secret to helping your baby learn words is to talk to him, talk to him and talk to him some more. It's even better if you say the same things over and over. After all, that's the way you taught him his name—

and you probably didn't even notice how you did it!

Your baby loves to have you point to pictures in books or magazines and say the words: "Dog. See dog. Car. Daddy's car." Your baby probably won't answer, but he's still listening and learning.

When you play ball together, keep up the pep-talk: "Ball. Roll ball. Good! Catch ball. Good!" Keep it simple, and say the words over and over.

"Ma-ma" and "Da-da" will be some of the first words your baby will say, and you should make a big happy fuss when he does it.
But your baby will also be making other sounds— clucking, coughing, smacking his lips— that are fun for him and give him good practice copying sounds that grownups make. Make a fuss over these, too, and copy them to show that you "understand" what he's "saying."

Another way to "talk to your baby is to simply show him what you want him to do by doing it yourself and saying the words as you go along. You can show him how to sit up, lie down, roll

the ball and many other simple things. After a while he'll catch on and will understand you more and more.

Helping Baby Explore Safely

There are not enough safety rules for every possible way that your baby might hurt himself. Remember that he loves to explore, he's getting faster every day, and he doesn't know what can hurt him.

If you have to leave him alone, even for a minute, try to use common sense and figure out how your baby might get into trouble.

Can he wiggle out of his high-chair? Tie him in.
Can he pull the hot iron or the coffee pot down? Put them away.
Can he get to the stairs and fall down? Close the safety gate.
Can he reach for the dog's or the cat's dinner and get bitten? Put your pets outside.

In a car the regular seat belts are not good for a baby, and might even hurt him in a crash. So get a car seat. Some kinds don't work right, so be sure to check up on which are the best kind and get a good one.

The seat next to the driver is the most dangerous in a sudden stop, while the seat behind the driver is safest. Be sure all doors are closed and locked.

Babies love fires, so be extra careful to keep them away from candles, fireplaces, rubbish fires and so on. Cookouts are especially dangerous because the grill can stay hot for a long time after cooking dinner, and it's usually a wobbly thing that a baby can pull down. Never leave a burning cigarette lying around, and keep matches and lighters out of reach. If your baby's clothes ever catch fire, quickly roll him up in a rug, coat or blanket. Most baby clothes and pajamas are fire-proof now. Check this out before buying fuzzy or frilly things that could catch fire.

The playpen is a nice safe place, but there's such a thing as *too* much safety and protection, and you don't want to overdo it. Bruises and little hurts are a natural part of growing up, and they're very important for teaching your baby what things can hurt him and how to avoid them.

You've Come a Long Way, Baby

Being a parent of a baby with special problems at birth takes a pretty special person. When you get past the first year, you have a right to be proud of what you've done.

Your baby has learned a lot from you, but you've probably learned even more from him. You've learned that it takes a lot of hard work to teach things that look easy, and that patience and love are as important for a baby as food and sleep.

Your baby is very special. He is his own person, with his own style in everything he does. As you watch him grow and learn you will come to understand him more and more. Enjoy him for the special things he brings to your life.

Toys for Daytime

1 - 4 Months

Infant seat

Bright mobiles

Small rattles

Soft colored toys. If you knit or crochet, balls can be made and stuffed. These are exciting playthings. Squeaky soft rubber toys are also exciting at this age.

5 - 8 Months

Jump chair or walker

Playpen

Household objects: empty milk cartons, pans, spoons, plastic dishes, clothespins, etc.

Rattles, blocks, soft toys, furry toys, dolls, squeaky rubber toys, firm teething rings

9 - 12 Months

Toys that represent household objects, for example, telephones

Hairbrush, spoons, combs, shoe box or coffee can with smooth edges, blocks, spools or clothespins

Mirror

Plastic milk bottle with lid, may be filled with brightly colored small toys

Plastic containers

Water play